The Fifth Estate

RADIO TELEVISION CABLE SATELLITE

Broadcasting Mar 7

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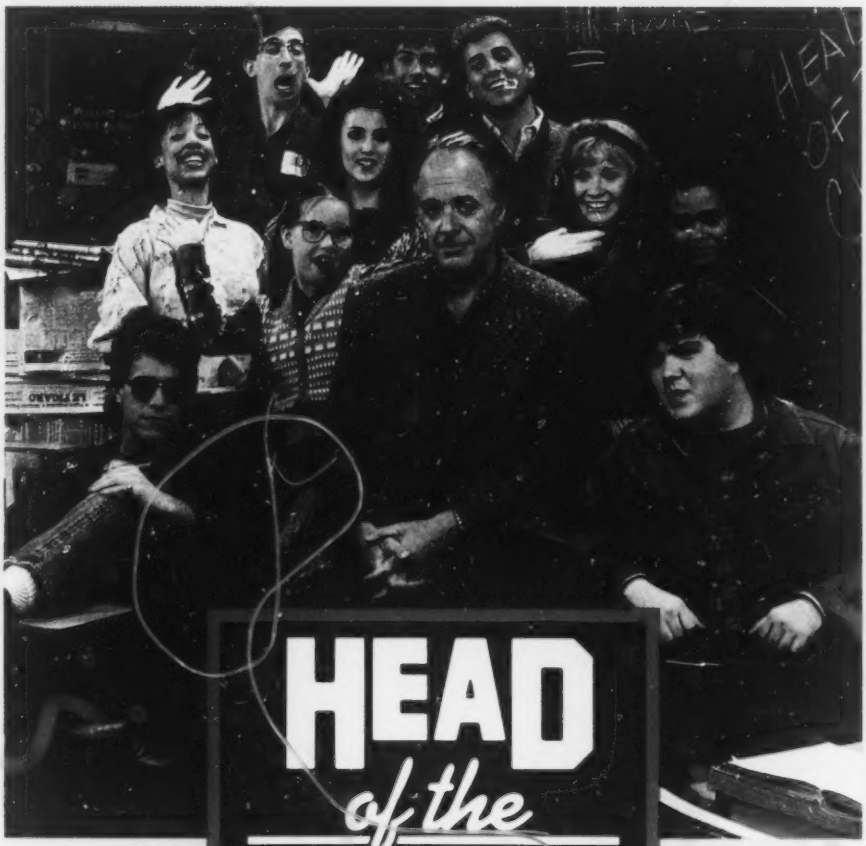

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57th Year 1988

SPECIAL REPORT
Baseball high fly: $366 million in rights

Vol. 114 No. 10

Broadcasting Mar 7

Olympics bring ABC February sweeps win...page 29.

ABC-E, Mutual on top in fall RADAR report...page 32.

Baseball rights hit $366 million...page 54.

UP IN THE AIR □ With expiration of TV rights contracts in 1990, Major League Baseball rights will be available to any and all. Whatever deal prevails will determine well into next decade where fans tune for America's national pastime. **PAGE 27.**

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE □ CBS and NBC cut back planned coverage of Super Tuesday; ABC still sees potential for super story. **PAGE 30.**

TNT □ Turner Broadcasting Chairman Ted Turner says "substantial progress" has been made on gaining support for launch of proposed Turner Network Television. **PAGE 31.**

DINGELL REPORT □ View from House Commerce Committee Chairman John Dingell indicates broadcast industry faces uphill climb in Congress. **PAGE 33.**

SLOW SHOW □ Although there was plenty to be had, neither large- nor small-market stations reported needing much in way of new product at this season's NATPE. Review of marketplace by syndicators proved mixed. Wrapup of convention activity begins on **PAGE 40.**

DIAMOND PRICES □ Estimated local and national television, radio and cable rights figures for upcoming baseball season approach $370 million. BROADCASTING's network and team-by-team breakdown begins on **PAGE 54.**

RENEWAL REFORM □ FCC Chairman Dennis Patrick says it may be time to revamp license renewal process. **PAGE 75.**

FCC AND THE COURTS □ Fowler/Patrick commission is not first to have suffered string of setbacks in court. However, over past two-and-half years, FCC has gone through rough patch on litigation front. **PAGE 78.**

LARGEST GETTING LARGER □ Cable MSO, Tele-Communications Inc., has revenue of $1.7 billion in 1987, reporting nearly 8.4 million basis subscribers for total operations. **PAGE 81.**

MUSIC ENSEMBLE □ "Music of Your Life" creator, producer and distributor, Al Ham Productions, joins with radio program consultancy, Fairwest, to form "programing consortium." New full-time music format to be offered. **PAGE 72.**

THE MII MOUSETRAP □ Stan Basara, Panasonic Broadcast Systems' president and CEO, has held jobs in engineering, manufacturing and management. Now his goal is to sell the industry on MII half-inch videotape format. **PAGE 111.**

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appeal of court ruling on must carry. U.S. Court of Appeals struck down latest incarnation of FCC's must-carry rules, holding that they are unconstitutional—violation of First Amendment rights of cable operators. Ruling on Dec. 11, 1987, was replay of court decision two years ago when it eliminated FCC's original must-carry rules on same ground. Four members of House Telecommunications Subcommittee and FCC Commissioner James Quello had called for congressional hearings to establish record for must carry, but this is first time since rules were thrown out last December that Senate Commerce Committee Chairman Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.) and House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman John Dingell (D-Mich.) have restated support for concept and indicated interest in legislative solution. Other must-carry interest on Capitol Hill includes proposal by Representative Matthew Rinaldo (R-N.J.), ranking minority member on the subcommittee that would tie cable deregulation to must carry (BROADCASTING, Feb. 15). Rinaldo is seeking industry support for proposal in which cable systems would be granted deregulation of rates and service) under Cable Act of 1984 if they met carriage requirements contained in cable-broadcast industry compromise agreed to in 1986. But idea has not received a strong endorsement from cable, which is leery of reopening act. Broadcasters who have fought hard to preserve some form of must-carry rules were upset and disappointed at ruling. They are now planning legal and legislative strategy for bringing back rules through appeals or act of Congress. National Association of Broadcasters television board last month directed NAB staff to seek all avenues to restore must carry. Association will also record and catalog all "cable abuses" that occur following demise of must carry. TV directors wanted to keep statements on must carry to minimum in effort to leave room for NAB President Eddie Fritts to negotiate with cable on matter. Fritts and National Cable Television Association President James P. Mooney are expected to explore possible resolution of must-carry issue. While court overturned substance of rules, it did not, it said in clarifying order issued on Jan. 29, outlaw A/B switch rules as well. Those rules require cable operators to educate subscribers about switches and to offer to instal them or supply them to do-it-yourselfers. Cos' of switches and installation would be borne by subscribers.

□

■ **Public Broadcasting.** Stephen Salyer, senior vice president, marketing and communications, WNET(TV) New York, vowing to "support the renaissance in radio," will become new American Public Radio president, effective April 1. APR, without full-time president since July 1987, announced choice Feb. 18.

Reauthorization hearings in House Telecommunications and Senate Communications Subcommittees have been tentatively set for March 11 and 15, respectively. Office of Management and Budget has recommended appropriations of $214 million for 1989, 1990 and 1991, which would require recisions in first two years. Figure falls $381 million short of CPB request for third year, which included $200 million for replacement of satellite interconnection system. (AT&T Comsat General, GE Americom, GTE Spacenet, Hughes Communications and Western Union all submitted satellite interconnection proposals to PBS Jan. 25; NPR also will need new bird in 1991.)

David J. Brugger, senior vice president at CPB, Jan. 1 became president of National Association of Public Television Stations. National Public Radio board this month set 1989 member station dues level at $18.4 million (figure includes one-time overhead and interest adjustment and assessment to offset predicted loss of stations from system, as well as 4.5% operating budget increase). Board will phase in over two years program unbundling plan that will offer for separate purchase morning news, evening news and performance program packages. Final 1989 budget will be approved at Public Radio Conference next May.

Eddie Fritts, president of National Association of Broadcasters, whose lobbying efforts are credited with defeating legislation that would have funded public broadcasting via transfer tax on commercial stations, met in February with presidents of CPB, PBS, and NAPTS, lobbying arm of public TV system. Fritts reportedly promised to work with them for permanent funding by some other means and to keep them abreast of must-carry discussions between broadcasters and cable operators.

□

Syndex. In comments to FCC, cable operators opposed, and broadcasters and program producers supported, FCC proposal to reimpose rules requiring cable systems to black out syndicated programing on distant signals if it appears on local stations. Action is expected within next few months. Cable industry argued that FCC lacks jurisdiction to reimpose syndex, that absence of rules over past seven years has not harmed broadcasters and producers and that rules would violate cable operators' First Amendment rights. Most broadcasters and producers contended that rules are needed to protect sanctity of their exclusive programing contracts. And, contrary to cable's claim, they say they have been hurt by cable's importation of duplicative distant signals into their markets. Last month National Association of Broadcasters during its joint board of directors meeting made restoration of syndex high priority, as well as obtaining same-day network nonduplication regulations.

□

TV stereo. CBS-TV announced that in fall 1988 it will transmit all programing in stereo. It is dramatic departure for network, which has been averaging about two hours per month of stereo programing. About one-third of CBS-TV's 200 affiliates are equipped to transmit in stereo. NBC-TV, with 139, has most affiliates capable of stereo delivery. This season, NBC's prime time schedule except for Night Court, half-hour sitcom, have been broadcast in stereo. Along with late-night programing and some sports telecasts, NBC averages 29 hours per week in stereo. ABC-TV, with 42 stereo affiliates, has 10 prime time stereo shows with average of 7 hours per week.

The Fifth Estate

Broadcasting

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Baseball bags almost $370 million in rights

The business of broadcasting Major League Baseball in 1988 remains lucrative, with estimated local and national TV, radio and cable rights figures for the upcoming season at $366 million.

ABC-TV and NBC-TV are in the fifth year of a six-year, $1.2-billion contract with MLB that will reportedly cost the networks $200 million this year. The contract, which runs through the 1989 season, contains an escalating fees clause that has increased rights figures yearly. CBS Radio Network is entering the fourth year of a five-year contract worth $32 million (see radio box).

The networks' contract sends the World Series to NBC (with all games airing in prime time) this year and with it knowledge that advertising revenue from a six- or seven-game series alone will likely make up for the $100 million reportedly paid to MLB by NBC. "Baseball continues to flourish as a spectator sport and as a programing commodity," said Kenneth Schanzer, executive vice president, NBC sports. ABC airs the American and National League Championships in '88 as well as the All-Star game.

For its Saturday afternoon *Game of the Week*, NBC will offer 30 single games and four doubleheaders. The 30 *Game of the Week* telecasts will feature two games, each shown in different regions. Vin Scully and Joe Garagiola will return as the announcers for the showcase *Game of the Week*, and Bob Costas and Tony Kubek will call the second game of the Saturday telecast. Marv Albert will host NBC's Saturday pre-game show. NBC coverage of the World Series

begins on Saturday, Oct. 15. Scully and Garagiola will announce the Series with Costas and Albert hosting the pre-game show. NBC kicks off its coverage on Mar. 20, with an exhibition game between the Los Angeles Dodgers and the New York Mets.

NBC's ratings have fluctuated very little in the past four years. Last year *Game of the Week* averaged a 6.1 rating, 20 share, down from the 6.4/21 during the 1984 and 1985 seasons. In 1986, NBC averaged a 6.3/20.

NBC will reportedly charge advertisers $40,000-$45,000 for a 30-second spot during the regular season games. According to an NBC spokesman, the inventory is 80% sold. "The marketplace is strong," said the spokesman, "we would probably be sold out but many agencies are waiting for clients to release budgets after the Olympics. Miller Brewing Co. remains a major advertiser of MLB on NBC, with Prudential increasing its participation and General Motors a new client for NBC baseball.

ABC is currently in the process of setting its schedule for the 1988 season. It's tentative line-up is eight Monday night games with the possible addition of some Sunday games. Last year, ABC carried eight Monday night games and one Sunday afternoon game. ABC begins its coverage on Monday night, May 30. An ABC spokesman said that ABC waits "a week or so [before announcing the scheduled game] in order to present the game with the most interest." ABC will air the All Star game on July 12 and the League Championship Series games beginning Tuesday, Oct. 4, for the American League and Wednesday, Oct. 5, for the National League. The LCS's will provide ABC with between eight and 14 games. It is expected that Al Michaels, Tim McCarver and Jim Palmer will return as ABC's primary announcing team.

Because *Monday Night Baseball* has never achieved the numbers comparable to *Monday Night Football*, ABC has decreased its number of telecasts, from a high of 18 in 1982, to the eight it will present this season. *Monday Night Baseball* averaged an 8.7 rating and a 16 share in 1987, down from a 9.4/17 in 1986 and a 9.5/17 in 1985.

Local rights fees for 1988 total $158 million representing an increase over 1987 of 3.2%. The American League East division garners the largest local rights fees among the four divisions—$51 million. The National League East, the A.L. West and the N.L. West divisions follow with $49.3 million, $34 million and $24.5 million, respectively.

A team by team breakdown follows:

♦ California Angels ♦

New radio and TV contracts take effect in this 1988 season for the California Angels. The team has a new five-year contract with KTLA(TV) and a three-year deal with KMPC(AM). KTLA has the rights to 60 regular season games, and KMPC has the rights to all pre-season and regular season games, as well as spring training reports. KMPC will broadcast to a network of 22 stations.

According to Angels' packaging agent, Spectacor, 35 games will be carried by local cable systems, although Spectacor did not have a total number of systems last week.

On television, Angels games will be called by Bob Starr and Joe Torre, and on radio Al Conin and Ken Brett will be behind the mikes.

Spanish radio coverage of the Angels will be over XPRS(AM) Tijuana, Mexico.

♦ Chicago White Sox ♦

Television broadcast rights to the Chicago White Sox are held by WFLD(TV), whose 70-game schedule includes three pre-season games. Major sponsors are McDonald's, Miller Beer, Taco Bell and Dodge. An anticipated network of 25 to 30 stations in Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, and Oregon is still being set up.

WMAQ(AM) Chicago, holder of the radio rights, was recently purchased by Westinghouse's Group W. The change to an all-news format will limit pre- and post-game shows to "probably 10 minutes on either side," according to general manager David Pearlman. Pearlman also reported that sales are running slightly behind last year's, with Miller Beer, Amoco, Chicagoland Chevrolet Dealers and True Value Hardware included among the major sponsors. Commentators for WMAQ will be Lorne Brown and former major league manager and player, Del Crandall. WMAQ is in the second year of a five-year contract.

Cable rights for the White Sox are held by regional cable network, SportsVision, which is in the middle of a 10-year contract with an option to renew. SportsVision will air 79 regular season and two exhibition games to approximately one million homes. Sales are running about 20% ahead of last year, according to Bob Fennimore, president of Rainbow Advertising, which handles advertising sales for Sportsvision. Sponsors so far include Anheuser-Busch, Chrysler Plymouth and True Value Hardware stores.

♦ Kansas City Royals ♦

Fans of the Kansas City Royals will be able to keep up with the details of the team's progress during 12 half-hour specials "recapping how the team stands to date," according to WDAF-TV's Buddy Turner. WDAF-TV, in the first year of a new five-year contract, will air 50 Royals games plus two in preseason. Former Royals pitcher, Paul Splittorff, will be new to WDAF-TV telecasts, joining play-by-play announcer Denny Trease. Sponsors include Miller, Ford and All-State Insurance.

The Royals on radio return to WIBW(AM) Topeka, Kan., after signing a new rights contract that will run through 1991. All regular season games and 16 preseason will be broadcast over a 120-station network, covering 10 states. Denny Matthews, voice of the Royals since the franchise was formed in the 1960's, will have play-by-play duties with 15-year announcer, Fred White. Major sponsors are Anheuser-Busch, Guy's Foods Inc., John Deere, Farmer's Insurance, Amaco and Western Auto.

♦ Minnesota Twins ♦

After a World Series victory, Minnesota Twins stations are finding it easier to sell time for the broadcasts. "There's been a large increase in interest this year versus any previous year," said Stuart Swartz, vice president and general manager, KMSP-TV Minneapolis. Because of the increased interest, KMSP-TV will add nine specials during the season to its schedule, featuring coaches' analysis and highlights. Two more affiliates to its Twins network raise the total to nine. They will air 68 games during the regular season and seven preseason games compared to last year's five. Major advertisers are Miller, Midwest Federal Savings and Loan, Burger King and Subaru.

According to WCCO(AM)'s local sales manager, Marybeth Wuench, most of the major sponsors for its Twins schedule—Anheuser-Busch, Red Owl, Dodge, Amaco, Midwest Federal, Hardware Hank—are return advertisers from last year. But "we've added a lot of people buying a minute or so," due to the

AMERICAN LEAGUE EAST

Team	1988 rights (000,000)	1987 rights (000,000)	TV originator and affiliates	Radio originator and affiliates	Cable originator	Rights holders
Baltimore Orioles	$6.30	$6.30	WMAR-TV 10	WBAL(AM) 40	Home Team Sports	WMAR-TV holds TV rights. WBAL holds radio rights. Home Team Sports holds cable rights.
Boston Red Sox	6.60	6.50	WSBK-TV 6	WPLM-AM-FM 81	New England Sports Network	WSBK-TV holds TV rights. WPLM holds radio rights. New England Sports Network (48% owned by Red Sox) holds pay-cable rights.
Cleveland Indians	3.00	3.00	WUAB(TV) 4	WWWE(AM) 28	none	WUAB(TV) holds TV rights. WWWE(AM) holds radio rights.
Detroit Tigers	6.00	5.00	WDIV(TV) 4	WJR(AM) 37	Pro Am Sports System	WDIV(TV) holds TV rights. WJR holds radio rights. Pro Am Sports Systems holds pay cable rights.
Milwaukee Brewers	3.60	3.60	WVTV(TV) 11	WTMJ(AM) 60	none	Brewers retain radio rights. WVTV(TV) holds TV rights.
New York Yankees	16.5	17.5	WPIX(TV) 10	WABC(AM) 39	Sports Channel	WPIX holds TV rights. WABC holds radio rights. SportsChannel holds pay cable rights.
Toronto Blue Jays	7.75	7.75	CTV-TV 21	CJCL(AM) 65	The Sports Network	Labatts Breweries of Canada (45% owner of team) holds TV rights. Telemedia Broadcast systems holds radio rights. The Sports Network holds cable rights.

AMERICAN LEAGUE WEST

California Angels	4.40	4.20	KTLA(TV) 15	KMPC(AM) 22	Spectacor	KTLA(TV) holds TV rights. KMPC(AM) holds English radio rights. XPRS Rose-Rita (Tijuana) Mexico holds Spanish radio rights. Spectacor sold rights to local cable outlets.
Chicago White Sox	9.30	9.30	WFLD-TV 5	WMAQ(AM) 25	Sportsvision	WFLD-TV retains TV rights. WMAQ(AM) retains radio rights. WTAQ(AM) holds Spanish radio rights and team retains cable rights.
Kansas City Royals	3.10	3.10	WDAF-TV 16	WIBW(AM) 120	none	WDAF-TV holds TV rights. WIBW holds radio rights.
Minnesota Twins	4.20	4.00	KMSP-TV 9	WCCO(AM) 65	Midwest Communications	KMSP-TV holds TV rights. Midwest Communications radio and cable rights.
Oakland As	3.20	3.00	KPIX(TV) 8 KICU-TV	KSFO(AM) 16	none	KPIX retains TV rights. Team retains the radio rights.
Seattle Mariners	3.70	3.50	KIRO-TV 5	KIRO(AM) 30	none	KIRO holds radio and TV rights.
Texas Rangers	6.10	6.00	KTVT(TV) 15	WBAP(AM) 18	Home Sports Entertainment	KTVT holds TV rights. WBAP holds radio rights. Home Sports Entertainment holds pay cable rights.

AL total: 1988—$85.00 million
1987—$81.45 million

NATIONAL LEAGUE EAST

Chicago Cubs	4.30	4.30	WGN-TV 30	WGN(AM) 74	WGN-TV as superstation	Stations hold rights under agreement with commonly owned Cubs.
Montreal Expos	7.00	.00	CBC-TV 20 CFCF-TV	CFCF(AM) 9 CKAC(AM) 30	The Sports Network	Labatt Breweries holds TV and cable rights. The English Radio Network holds English radio rights. Telemedia French radio rights.
New York Mets	17.0	16.50	WWOR(TV) 14	WFAN(AM) 110	Sports Channel	Mets have partnership arrangement with broadcast originators. SportsChannel holds pay cable rights.
Philadelphia Phillies	10.0	9.50	WTAF-TV 2	WCAU(AM) 29	Prism	Phillies sell radio, TV and cable rights, but retain cable ad time.
Pittsburgh Pirates	5.00	4.00	KDKA-TV 5	KDKA(AM) 40	KBL Entertainment Network	Team retains radio rights and sells TV and cable rights.
St. Louis Cardinals	6.00	5.10	KPLR-TV 27	KMOX(AM) 115	CenCom Cable	KPLR holds TV rights. KMOX has radio rights. Cencom Cable holds cable rights.

NATIONAL LEAGUE WEST

Atlanta Braves	4.00	4.00	WTBS	WSB(AM)	WTBS as superstation	WTBS is TV rights holder under agreement with commonly owned Braves; team retains radio rights.
Cincinnati Reds	4.20	4.00	WLWT 22	WLW 72	none	WLWT holds TV rights. Reds retain radio rights.
Houston Astros	4.00	3.60	KTXH(TV) 17	KTRH 40-45	Home Sports Entertainment	KTXH has TV rights. Astros retain radio rights. Home Sports Entertainment holds cable rights.
Los Angeles Dodgers	5.00	5.70	KTTV(TV)	KABC(AM) 30 KWKW(AM) Spanish	Z-Channel	KTTV holds TV rights. KABC holds English radio rights. KWKW holds Spanish radio rights. Z-Channel holds cable rights.
San Diego Padres	4.30	4.20	KUSI-TV 7	KFMB(AM) 12 XEXX(AM) 20	Cox Cable	Padres retain radio and TV rights. Padres and Cox jointly hold pay TV rights.
San Francisco Giants	3.00	2.90	KTVU 5	KNBR 10 KIQI(AM) 32	Giantsvision	Broadcast originators hold rights.

NL total: 1988—$73.50 million
1987—$71.90 million

Not included in the table are network payments for nationally broadcast games that total about $200 million: $100 million for NBC-TV, $100 million for ABC-TV and $6.5 million for CBS Radio.

Twin's success last season, she said.

Along with the 162 regular season games, the station will also air 14 preseason games. A pregame show that premiered last year will be continued, she said, and is almost sold out. The post-game show is sold out.

KMSP-TV and WCCO share color announcers Jim Kaat and John Gordon. Television play-by-play is handled by Ted Robinson, and Herb Carneal fulfills that role on radio.

Midwest Communications, co-owned with WCCO, has the Twins' cable rights and is committed to televising 25 home games with an option to pick up eight more after Sept. 1. They will be distributed to an estimated 300,000 subscribers on a pay-per-view basis in and around the Twin Cities. TV stations in four cities outside the metropolitan area—Duluth, Minn., Fargo, N.D., Sioux Falls, S.D., and Mason City, Iowa—will pick up the Midwest feed for distribution over the air. "Those games that are not carried by the broadcasters are then carried on basic cable in those same markets," said Midwest General Manager Bill Craig. Midwest experimented with this system for 12 games last season with one of them reaching an estimated audience of 1.5 million homes. Depending upon the number of cable systems and TV stations picking them up, the games should attract 500,000 to 1.5 million homes this year. Advertisers signed up so far include Budweiser and Pizza Hut.

♦ Oakland A's ♦

With a new broadcast deal in place this year, the A's will again be seen on KPIX(TV) and heard on KSFO(AM) Oakland. Joining KPIX will be KICU-TV San Jose.

According to a station executive who asked not to named, under the new deal the A's now handle "all aspects" of the broadcasts.

Under the new deal, KPIX and KICU-TV will broadcast a total of 49 games. KSFO will broadcast all pre- and regular season games.

The A's retain the radio rights while the television stations hold the TV rights.

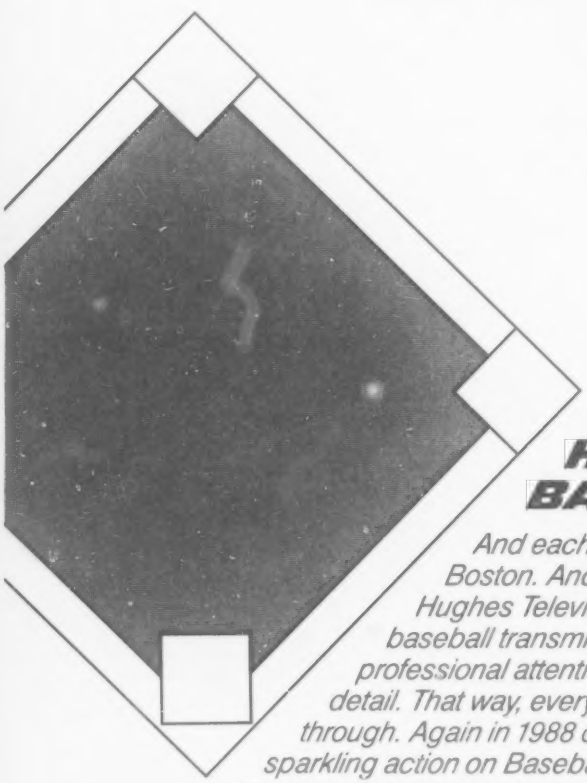
Spanish language radio coverage is through KNTA(FM) San Jose.

There is no cable coverage of the team. Calling the games for KPIX(TV) will be Monte Moore and Ray Fosse, while the radio team consists of Fosse, Bill King and Lon Simmons.

♦ Seattle Mariners ♦

The Seattle Mariners will be seen on both KIRO-TV and KTZZ(TV) this year, as they were last, in an arrangement that both stations said worked well. Because of network pre-emptions, CBS affiliate KIRO-TV, which has the rights to 35 games, sublicenses the rights to 41 other games to independent KTZZ. KIRO-TV has lined up a five-station network and is working on other agreements with stations in Idaho and Montana. John Norden, vice president and general manager, said sales are going "fairly well," with Budweiser, True Value Hardware, Toyota, Pacific Northwest Bell, GTE and Union Oil signed to date.

KIRO(AM) has lined up about 30 stations for its coverage of 20 preseason and all 162 regular season games. Sales Manager Bill Aanenson said the station was "in good shape," with advertising demand "well ahead of last year." Signings include Budweiser,



HUGHES TELEVISION NETWORK
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♦ Texas Rangers ♦

Gaylord Broadcasting's KTVT(TV) Fort Worth is entering the fourth year of a five-year deal as television rights holder for the Texas Rangers. Gaylord purchased 35% of the club four years ago. (Long-time Rangers owner Eddie Chiles controls the remaining shares.)

KTVT, which is a "passive" superstation, will air 65 away games—up from 60 last season—and one preseason contest. The station, said Charles Edwards, executive vice president for Gaylord and general manager of the KTVT, transmits the games to a five-state regional network of 15 stations.

Among the advertisers for 1988 are Budweiser, True Value hardware stores, Nissan, Chief auto parts, Goody's headache powder, Texaco and Dr Pepper—the latter is a new addition to Texas Rangers television broadcasts this season. Edwards said sales are 21% up over last year's pace.

On the radio side, WBAP(AM) Fort Worth will be airing the Rangers for the 15th consecutive year as it begins the last year of a four-year rights package. WBAP, which also serves as the originating station for a regional network of 18 stations, will air 20 preseason and all regular season games.

Advertisers include Budweiser, Delta, Coca-Cola, GTE, True Value, Ford and Gulf Oil. Baseball sales are currently running 15% ahead of the same time a year ago, said John Hare, WBAP president and general manager.

Home Sports Entertainment (HSE), a division of the Houston Sports Association, will be going into the second year of a two-year pact (which has a two-year option) for the Rangers pay cable rights. HSE will air 60 Ranger home games over 177 systems across a five-state area—mostly Texas—to a subscriber universe of 700,000. Those system and subscriber totals are up substantially from a year ago, when HSE carried the games over 121 systems to 225,000 subscribers. There will also be 25 games carried on HSE's Florida network, known as the Sunshine Network, according to Ed Frazier, HSE president.

The advertising roster for HSE's carriage of the Rangers includes Budweiser, Mazda, Whataburger (Texas fast food chain) and Chrysler.

♦ Baltimore Orioles ♦

Chuck Thompson, a play-by-play announcer for almost 40 years, is retiring this year as Baltimore Orioles announcer for WMAR-TV. Along with Oriole telecasts, Thompson served as the radio voice of the Orioles and former area teams, baseball's Washington Senators (now the Texas Rangers) and football's Baltimore (now Indianapolis) Colts, during his career. He joined WMAR-TV in 1979 when that station first acquired television rights to the Orioles. Thompson's successor, who will join former Oriole third baseman Brooks Robinson in the WMAR-TV booth, has not been found, the station said.

According to Howard Zeiden, WMAR-TV vice president of sales, the station will broadcast 42 regular season games and four preseason. Major advertisers are Anheuser-Busch, C&P Yellow Pages, Nissan, Preferred Health Network, Jiffy Lube, Valvoline, McDonald's, Bob Davidson Ford and Giant Foods.

About 740,000 subscribers on 115 cable systems in the Baltimore-Washington area will see the Orioles on Home Team Sports, a Washington-based regional pay sports channel. Also, HTS will start the season on April 6 with a nine-day "HTS Free-View Marathon" period for all basic cable subscribers. There will be a 30-minute post-game show with interviews and league highlights for the first time on HTS this year.

For 65 of the cablecasts at Baltimore's Memorial Stadium (out of the 90 games HTS will present), a left field camera angle that got favorable viewer response when initiated last year, will be lowered 30 feet, resulting in "a more dramatic look down the foul line, right over the third baseman's shoulder," according to HTS producer Bill Brown. (For those familiar with Memorial Stadium, the camera will be placed just above the tomato patch that is planted yearly in the left field bull pen.) Mel Proctor and John Lowenstein return to announce Oriole games for HTS. Advertisers signed so far include Giant Foods and Subaru.

WBAL(AM) begins a three-year contract for radio rights to the Orioles this season. The station broadcast the games for 18 years before losing the rights nine years ago to WFBR(AM). WBAL won the bid for rights this year after the Orioles withdrew them from last year's rights holder, WCBM(AM), for allegedly defaulting on their contract. WBAL is promoting the Oriole's return to the station "very aggressively" under the slogan "The Orioles are Loud and Clear on WBAL," according to station manager, Jeff Beauchamp. "One of the complaints among Baltimoreans [since the Orioles left WBAL] has been that they couldn't hear it because the stations they were on had great signal limitations," Beauchamp said. The 162 regular season and 16 spring training games will be announced this season by Jon Miller and Joe Angel. Sponsors include Budweiser, Bryant Heating and Air, Jeep-Eagle-AMC and Amoco.

♦ Boston Red Sox ♦

WSBK-TV Boston is entering the third year of its five-year contract to carry Red Sox games. Broadcasting to a network of six stations, it is covering 75 regular season and three preseason games, said Steve Tauber, assistant general manager, and those stations rebroadcast a varying number of games, between 25 and 45. The station has not sold out advertising spots yet. Major sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, New England Ford Dealers, MacDonald's, Delta and Midas Muffler.

Cable coverage for the Red Sox will be handled by New England Sports Network, which is partially owned by the team, the Boston Bruins, and Gillett Broadcasting (which also owns WSBK-TV). NESN is "strictly a pay service," said vice president and general manager, John Claiborne, and reaches 217,884 subscribers on 168 systems in 650 New England towns, up from last year's 172,258 subscribers. The service carries 83 regular season and 11 preseason games. A new announcing crew of Ned Martin and former Sox second baseman, Jerry Remmy, are on board and will also handle the half-hour pre- and post-game shows. Major sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, Polaroid, Nissan, Chevrolet and Texaco. Claiborne reports that advertising avails are almost sold out.

WPLM-AM-FM Plymouth, Mass., will continue to originate games to a network that now has 81 stations, six more than last year, in New England and Florida, said station president and general manager, John Campbell. The station has two years left on its contract and will broadcast 162 regular season games and 22 preseason contests. Major advertisers include Budweiser, American Motors and Chrysler. Covering the games will be Ken Coleman and Joe Castiglione.

♦ Cleveland Indians ♦

Both the radio and television rights holders remain the same for Cleveland Indians baseball this season. WWWE(AM) returns with a new multiyear contract, while WUAB(TV) is in the last of a three-year contract. Anheuser-Busch is a major sponsor for both rights holders. The

radio station will broadcast the full slate of Indians games, and Harvey Simms, WWWE's station manager, reports sales are pacing well compared to last year. WUAB(TV) will broadcast four preseason games, 15 home games and 45 road contests. Ron St. Charles, assistant general manager and program director at WUAB, said the Indians games are a "harder sell this year" given the team's last-place finish a year ago. "Last year the Indians were picked as a dark horse contender," said St. Charles. "They were a much easier sell. The sales pace is down." But both executives said the Indians broadcasts were important to the image the stations have in the community. Both stations also carry Cleveland Cavaliers basketball games and WWWE carries Cleveland Browns football games as well. Simms said the Indians remain an important profit center for the radio station. On the television side, however, the same cannot be said. "They are certainly a major part of our image," said St. Charles. "But they aren't a critical profit center. It's getting tougher and tougher to make money on a major sports franchise, because the rights fees continue to rise." Still, St. Charles predicted the station would make a small profit on the Indians telecasts this year.

♦ Detroit Tigers ♦

Increasing its coverage from 45 regular season games last year to 52 plus five preseason games, WDIV(TV) Detroit feeds the games to a network of four stations. Major sponsors include Miller, Ford, Kroger, Taco Bell, Goodyear, Pepsi, Michigan Bell, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Blue Cross and Burger King. Chris Rohrs, the station's general sales manager, said the station is having a "very strong year, with sales up about 10% over last year." WDIV(TV) has a pregame show hosted by Bernie Smilovitz. Play-by-play will again be handled by hall-of-famers Al Kaline and George Kell.

WJR(AM) Detroit, which originates the team's radio broadcasts, is "almost sold out," said national sales manager Tom Wagner. The station will broadcast 162 regular season and 20 pre-season games. Handling the broadcasts will be veteran sportscasters Ernie Halwell and Paul Kary. The largest sponsors are Ford Motor Co., Marathon Oil, Anheuser-Busch, Maxicare and Comerica.

Pro Am Sports Systems cable service will carry 80 Detroit Tiger games in 1988, with 55 home and 25 road games. Returning as announcers are Larry Osterman, who will handle play-by-play, and Jim Northrup, in his second season doing color commentary. Osterman also hosts a feature show, *The Pennant Chase*.

♦ Milwaukee Brewers ♦

Radio broadcasts of the Brewers games will go out over WTMJ(AM), which feeds to a 67-station network in 50 markets. One hundred and sixty two games will be aired along with 18 preseason and one exhibition. WTMJ's contract runs until 1993, however, radio rights are retained by the Brewers. Promotions include the Miller Home Run Sweepstakes, in which contestants whose names are announced at the beginning of an inning will win an accumulated jackpot if a home run is hit during that inning. Besides Miller, major sponsors are Pepsi, Century Insurance, Amoco, Midwest Express Air, Wisconsin Division of Tourism and Farmers Insurance.

Ad sales for the Milwaukee Brewers are "brisk, partly as a result of a terrific '87 Brewers season," according to WVTV(TV)'s director of operations and engineering, Lyle Schulze. Rates have increased and been accepted accordingly. WVTV, holder of the television rights, will broadcast a 60-game schedule to an 11 station network throughout Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Florida and upper Michigan. Major sponsors this year include Miller Beer, True Value Hardware, Car-X mufflers and Century food stores.

♦ New York Yankees ♦

WPIX(TV) will be entering the 38th consecutive year of New York Yankees telecasts through the second year of a four-year rights package. However, as of this writing, the station had not yet settled on the number of telecasts it will feature during the upcoming season versus the number of cablecasts over SportsChannel, which is embarking on the seventh year of a 15-year pay-cable deal. Discussions concerning the number of televised games over WPIX are still going on with the Yankees, said Marty Appel, vice president of public relations and sports for WPIX. It is anticipated, however, that WPIX will either broadcast the same number of regular season games as last year—53—or "slightly less." It is also expected that SportsChannel will again air 100 games.

(Last year, when BROADCASTING went to press with its annual Baseball special, it reported that WPIX was planning to air 75 regular-season games in 1987 [BROADCASTING, March 2, 1987]. That number was subsequently reduced to 53.)

What is known to date for WPIX is that it will air three preseason contests. The station will also originate Yankees telecasts over a regional network of 10 stations. Among the major sponsors are Anheuser-Busch (Budweiser), Chrysler Plymouth, Canon Cameras and the *New York Daily News*.

For SportsChannel, major advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, Toyota, Nynex, Dodge and The Wiz. The cable channel reaches 1.1 million households over 98 systems within a three-state area.

On the radio front, talk-formatted WABC(AM) will be entering the second year of a five-year rights pact. The station, according to its president and general manager, Fred Weinhaus, will air 13 preseason games and all regular season games over a regional network of 39 stations. That network will include three Florida stations: WSBR(AM) Boca Raton; WIOD(AM) Miami, and WRBQ(AM) St. Petersburg.

Key radio sponsors for the Yankees in 1988 include Anheuser-Busch, Marine Midland, and Nissan. "We are pacing substantially ahead of last year [in advertising sales]," said Weinhaus.

♦ Toronto Blue Jays ♦

Labatts Breweries, through its subsidiary TV Labatts, owns the television rights to the Toronto Blue Jays, American League East pennant contenders last year. (Labatts also owns TV rights for the National League East's Montreal Expos.)

Toronto-based CTV Television Network, with 21 affiliates in Canada, will air 39 Blue Jays games this season, as well as 10 preseason games. The broadcasts' top five sponsors are Labatts, Imperial Oil, Xerox, Coca-Cola and Toyota. CTV announcers again this year are Don Chevrier, Fergie Olver and NBC's baseball sportscaster Tony Kubek.

Canadian cable channel, The Sports Network (TSN), will also telecast 40 or more regular season games, in addition to three presea-

son contests. Major sponsors are Labatts, Petro-Canada and GM. Announcing the games will be Olver, with former Blue Jay Buck Martinez providing color.

Telemedia Broadcast Services of Toronto, owner of the team's radio rights, will broadcast all 162 regular season games and 10 preseason games. The broadcasts originate from CJCL(AM), its owned station in Toronto, and reach 65 radio affiliates in Canada. Sponsors include Labatts, McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Petro-Canada, Black's Cameras, CIBC, Ontario Lottery, IDA Drug Stores, Zenith, Miracle Food Mart, General Motors (exclusive within show) and Nissan (post-game show sponsor). IDA, Miracle, Zenith and Canadian Airlines all sponsor special promotions during the season. Radio announcers are Tom Cheek, Jerry Howarth and, for pregame and post-game shows, Scott Ferguson.

♦ Atlanta Braves ♦

WTBS(TV) will carry Ted Turner's Atlanta Braves. The superstation has decreased its coverage to 135 games (131 regular season and four preseason) from last year's total of 150. The

drop is due to a scheduling conflict with Turner's NBA Atlanta Hawks. Ernie Johnson, Pete Wieren, Skip Carey and Billy Sample will alternate announcing chores for WTBS and WSB(AM).

WSB(AM) Atlanta, is the originating station for a 115-station network that will air all 162 regular season games and 15 preseason games. WSB has been the radio carrier for Braves baseball for 21 of the past 22 seasons. The radio station is in the last year of a three-year deal.

The Atlanta Braves' promotional theme for 1988 is "One Crazy Summer." Fans can expect giveaways and concerts, with one concert featuring the Beach Boys. Major sponsors for Braves baseball include Coca-Cola, Delta Airlines, Anheuser-Busch, Toyota, Goody's headache powders and Amoco.

♦ Cincinnati Reds ♦

WLWT(TV) Cincinnati, which has carried the Reds since 1956, will originate 47 games for a 22-station network reaching nine states this year. In the announcing booth, former Reds catcher Johnny Bench will be joined by Jay Randolph, who did play-by-play for the St. Louis Cardinals last year. Last year's television and part-time radio announcers, Marty Brennaman and Joe Nuxhall, will concentrate on radio this year, on WLW(AM).

WLWT Sales Director Ned Paddock said the Reds are 85% sold out on the network, with Anheuser-Busch, Toyota, Delta Airlines, Long John Silver, Blue Cross, Lenscrafter and General Tire. Paddock said local sales are 80% sold out, with advertisers including Ford dealers, Hardee's, Taco Bell and Pepsi.

On the radio side, the Reds retain the broadcast rights and sell the avails in each game, roughly 30 minutes. WLW carries a pre- and post-game show and has the rights to sell advertising in those segments, roughly 16 minutes per game. A portion of that revenue is handed back over to the Reds. The station's general sales manager, Tom Horan, said WLW is almost 90% sold out, with advertisers including Anheuser-Busch, Auto Manage (a local auto dealer), Sears, Bob Evans, White Castle and Sherwin Williams. In-game advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, Marathon Oil, First National Bank, Maxwell House, Ohio Lottery and Big Boy. The station took in an estimated $1 million in advertising revenue last year, a figure, it is estimated, that the Reds at least matched in-game. In-game advertising minutes are almost twice the amount of the combined pre- and post-game shows. The station will air all regular season games and 20-24 preseason contests. WLW has lined up a 72-station network for the Reds.

♦ Houston Astros ♦

Originating broadcasts of the Astros is KTXH(TV) Houston, which will cover 83 games including seven preseason contests. The station feeds a network of "around 17 stations," said general manager Vince Barresi, who reports that sales are "terrific, much ahead of last year." Major sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, Southwestern Bell and Kroger. The station is in the third year of a revised 10-year contract that was renegotiated this year.

KTRH(AM) has a package of 162 regular sea-

son games and 20 preseason games that it sends to a network of about 40 stations, said Michael Packer, the station's general manager. The Astros hold the radio rights, but Packer reports that sales are going well for the station's pre- and post-game shows: *Astros Countdown* and *Astros Wrap*.

Radio rights are retained by the Astros, and Jamie Hildreath, director of broadcasting for the Astros, reports that sales are "way ahead of last year." Major sponsors include Budweiser, Gulf, Kroger, Subaru and Coca-Cola.

Home Sports Entertainment's subscriber count grew almost 300% from last year when it reached 235,000 subscribers. According to HSE spokesman Jim Manning, the cable network currently reaches about 650,000 subscribers in Texas and contiguous states, but he said they expected to reach a million subs by the end of the year. In addition, HSE is the managing partner in a new venture, The Sunshine Network (BROADCASTING, Feb. 22), which is principally owned by 11 cable MSO's. It is available to about 1.5 million subscribers in Florida. HSE will carry 75 regular season and six preseason games this year and The Sunshine Network will carry 25 regular season and six preseason contests. Manning said sales were going very well; major advertisers include Coca-Cola, Anheuser-Busch, Mazda, Texaco and Eastern Airlines.

♦ Los Angeles Dodgers ♦

Nineteen-eighty-eight will mark the first year the Los Angeles Dodgers have released the broadcast rights to their games. KABC(AM) Los Angeles will be picking up the Dodgers for the 14th year in a row, while television broadcasts

will be handled by KTTV(TV). Both stations have signed a five-year contract. Spanish rights are held by KWKW(AM) Los Angeles, which will broadcast a full schedule.

KABC's Ken Miller says sales are going "great," with major play-by-play sponsors being Unocal Oil Co., Anheuser-Busch, Nissan Motor Corp., Coca-Cola bottling and Farmer John meats. Approximately 190 games will be fed to a 30-station network in California, Arizona and Nevada.

KTTV will broadcast 50 away games this year with Vin Scully, Don Drysdale and Ross Porter providing color commentary. Former Dodgers player Rick Mondy will host *Dodgers Central* while Vin Scully will do an interview show. Sales are strong, with spots already sold to Anheuser-Busch, Nissan and Coca-Cola.

American Cablesystems Corp.'s Z Channel will carry 35 home Dodgers games this year to a subscribership of approximately 100,000. No announcers have yet been signed. Advertising sales have also not yet been initiated. According to Executive Producer Charlie Stark, Z Channel is primarily a motion picture

service and the possibility of advertising is still under discussion.

♦ San Diego Padres ♦

The Padres have taken the course of purchasing time on television and radio, retaining the rights and keeping all the advertising. Jim Winters, director of broadcasting for the team, said the arrangement, done for the first time last year, "worked out just fine." A chief advantage is that it creates a one-stop shopping

center for promoters and/or advertisers, as there can be in stadium and media tie-in promotions.

Winters would not disclose advertising revenue, but said television advertising sales were ahead of last year and radio sales were "far ahead" of last year's pace. The Padres, after a slow start, finished strong in their division, and that has helped fuel sales, Winters said.

The Padres buy time on KUSI-TV and KFMB(AM). The independent television station (ch. 51) will carry 51 games on a seven-station network. The station is in the second year of an eight-year deal that has two three-year renewal clauses. Winters reports advertising sales ahead of last year, with Anheuser-Busch, Jack in the Box and Mitsubishi Motors signed. The team pays the station a fee per game and gets a certain amount of promotion time for KUSI-TV within the telecasts.

KFMB(AM) will carry 192 games, including 30 preseason games. Advertisers signed include Anheuser-Busch, Jack in the Box, Chevron, Coca-Cola, Home Federal Savings, Goodyear, Foodbasket and Farmers Insurance. XEXX(AM) Tijuana will originate the games in Spanish.

The Padres and Cox Cable will again be offering some Padres games on a pay package and pay-per-view basis. The 41-game package costs $140; on a per-game basis $5.95. Winters said although last year's figures were off from previous highs, the team "made money."

♦ San Francisco Giants ♦

KTVU(TV) Oakland is in the last year of a five-year rights agreement with the Giants, in which it will air 40 regular season and one preseason game, the Giants versus cross-town rival, Oakland, on March 19.

The station plans to carry the Giants opener live, an afternoon game in Los Angeles on April 4, then repeat it that evening in prime time, for the benefit of fans who missed it earlier. The station will also air three half-hour specials on the Giants throughout the year.

Bill McGowan, general sales manager, said the games are about 75% sold out with the upfront season "running ahead of last year."

Advertisers signed to date include Miller beer, Chevron, Safeway and Toyota. The announcing team this year will include station sports anchor Steve Physioc and former major leaguers Duane Kuiper and Ron Fairly. Kuiper handles the Giants cable pay-per-view games, while Fairly also handles radio.

KNBR(AM) is in the last year of a five-year contract for all regular season and 12 preseason games. Jay Barrington, the station's sales coordinator for sports, said sales are "as well sold as anticipated." He said advertisers include Pontiac and Nissan dealers, Anheuser-Busch, Chevron, Farmers Insurance, Goodyear, Grossman's Hardware, Delta Dental Plan and AAA. In addition to Fairly, Wayne Hagin will return to do the play-by-play. KIQI(AM) will handle the Spanish-language broadcasts.

The Giants will also offer a pay-per-view package of 36 games this year, including the home opener. The number of systems offering Giantsvision has risen from 42 to 57, with a corresponding subscriber jump from 1 million to 1.4 million.

♦ Chicago Cubs ♦

WGN will have both the television and radio rights to the Chicago Cubs games again this year. Jake Fendley, director of sports for WGN-TV Chicago, reports that sales are "pacing about 25% ahead of last year." Major sponsors include Anheuser-Busch, True Value hardware, *The Chicago Tribune*, Unocal Oil Co. and Chicagoland Buick dealers. The play-by-play will be handled by Harry Carey with color provided by Steve Stone. WGN-TV will broadcast 154 games, including four preseason. They will feed to a network of approximately 30 stations in Illinois, Indiana and Iowa set up by Tribune Entertainment.

WGN(AM) will broadcast 163 of the Cubs games to a network of 74 stations in Illinois, Iowa, North Carolina, Colorado, Nevada and Florida. The station owns the rights to the

games, which will include *Scouting Report*, a 35-minute pregame magazine format and *Scoreboard*, a 15-20-minute wrapup. WGN(AM) reports that sales are running about the same as last year, partly because "the Cubs are a legend and attendance doesn't seem to have much to do with what's happening on the field." Sponsors this year will be G. Heilman Brewing, Cotter & Co., Chevrolet, Marathon Petroleum, Bob Evans and Talman Home.

♦ Montreal Expos ♦

In the second year of a five-year, near $30-million contract, Labatts beer holds the TV and cable rights for Montreal Expos baseball. In bilingual Canada, coverage is split into net-

CBS Radio's baseball lineup

The CBS Radio Network is entering the fourth year of a five-year, $32-million deal for Major League Baseball's radio rights encompassing 26 *Game of the Week* broadcasts, the annual All Star game, the league championships and the World Series. The weekly broadcast schedule contains two games (one day and one night) every Saturday beginning with Toronto Blue Jays at Minnesota Twins and Pittsburgh Pirates at St. Louis Cardinals on April 9. CBS will also air at least four "pennant race" weekday games toward the end of the season.

According to Steve Youlios, vice president of sales for the CBS Radio Networks, CBS basically offers two sales packages: the summer series, which is the full 26-week slate plus the All Star game, and the fall series, which comprises the league championships and the World Series. "Most summer series advertisers in 1987 have already renewed for the upcoming season," said Youlios, adding that the summer sponsorships account for a 60%-65% sell-out rate. (Another 15% to 25% of CBS's baseball inventory is sold on a scatter basis.)

Major advertisers already signed to sponsorships for 1988 are Anheuser-Busch, True Value hardware stores (Cotter & Co.); Gates Rubber Co., Tinactin—all summer and fall series advertisers—Honda and Buick.

Announcers for CBS Radio's baseball coverage include Brent Musburger, Johnny Bench, Bill White, Jerry Coleman, John Rooney, Dick Stockton, Howard David, Jim Hunter and Gene Elston. Local team announcers will join the CBS crew during the fifth inning of each game, known as the "home town" inning, which will be exclusively sponsored by True Value. Youlios expects CBS's lineup of baseball affiliates to be virtually the same as last year's total of 265.

works of French and English broadcasts and the French-language TV rights have been resold to Radio Canada, which will carry the games over a network of 20 stations. Play-by-play will be done by Raymond LeBrun and color commentary will be handled by Claude Raymond. The English television broadcasts are done by TV Labatts Network, which broadcasts some of the games on the Canadian Broadcasting Corp., and some on independent stations. The originating station for the English broadcasts is CFCF-TV Montreal.

Cable coverage is over The Sports Network, which reaches 1.2 million subscribers on 950 cable systems across Canada. Those games will all be broadcast in English, and handling announcing duties will be Dave Van Horn and Ken Singleton.

Radio coverage is also split into two networks. Telemedia, the French network, will broadcast the games from CKAC(AM) Montreal to a network of about 30 stations. The English Radio Network will broadcast from CFCF(AM) Montreal, to nine stations. Handling play-by-play in English will again be Dave Van Horn, while Jim Fanning will provide color. For the French broadcasts, Jacques Doucet and Rober Broulette will handle announcing duties.

♦ New York Mets ♦

WWOR(TV) (formerly WOR[TV] New York and now licensed to Secaucus, N.J.) will begin its 27th consecutive year as the originator of New York Mets broadcasts, a rights partnership arrangement the station has had with the Mets since the team's inception. WWOR, which is entering the second year of a five-year deal, will air 75 home and away regular season games as well as eight preseason contests. Major "full sponsors" for WWOR's coverage of the Mets include Anheuser-Busch, Manufacturers Hanover and Nissan, according to Tom Ryan, station vice president and general sales manager. Partial sponsors include Oldsmobile dealers and Bell Atlantic. "Sales are pacing stronger than last year," Ryan said. The station will serve as the originating station for a regional network of 13 to 14 stations.

For radio, all-sports WFAN(AM) (formerly country WHN[AM]), plans to air not only all regular season games, but all 26 preseason games as well, said Scott Meier, WFAN vice president and general manager. (WFAN is the nation's first 24-hour all-sports radio station.) The station, which will be starting its third year of a five-year rights package, also has a revenue-sharing arrangement with the Mets. Among the major sponsors on radio are Chrysler-Plymouth, Budweiser, Dollar Dry Dock Savings Bank, New York State Lottery and New York Racing Association. "We're confident we'll meet our sales projections," Meier said. The station will feed a regional Mets network of 108 to 110 stations, which is up considerably from last year's roster of 42 stations.

SportsChannel is entering the seventh year of a 30-year deal as the pay cable rights holder for New York Mets baseball and plans to air 75 home and away games. Major advertisers include Anheuser-Busch, Toyota, Nynex, New York Telephone and Buick. SportsChannel is carried on 98 systems across a three-state area, reaching 1.1 million subscribing households.

♦ Philadelphia Phillies ♦

The Phillies broadcast-cable scenario for 1988 remains virtually unchanged from 1987. Its three facets: WTAF-TV Philadelphia, WCAU(AM) Philadelphia and PRISM, a regional cable sports and entertainment channel.

According to Phillies' Dennis Lehman, WTAF-TV will broadcast 85 regular season games and five preseason contests. PRISM is set to televise 39 regular-season games (33 home and six away), he said. And WCAU plans to air every regular season game and 22 preseason games, although some of the preseason games may be preempted by Villanova and Temple basketball.

For the broadcast television rights, WTAF-TV, which is the lead station in a three-station network, pays the Phillies a rights fee plus a percentage of the advertising revenue under an 11-year agreement that runs through the 1992 season. WTAF-TV projects it will increase advertising revenues 20% this year, said general manager Jim Boaz. WTAF-TV's principal Phillies advertisers will be Anheuser-Busch, Valvoline, Mellon Bank, First Pennsylvania Bank, Blue Cross of Pennsylvania, Bell of Pennsylvania and Oldsmobile.

PRISM also pays a rights fee, but the Phillies retain and sell the advertising time. Neither the Phillies nor PRISM would reveal the dollars involved in their deal, but Phillies Executive Vice President David Montgomery said the Phillies expected advertising revenue to be up 20% to 30%. The PRISM advertisers will include Anheuser-Busch, Texaco, Foot Locker, Blue Cross of Philadelphia, Mid-Atlantic Milk and Mr. Good Buys.

WCAU, which has an 11-year contract that runs through 1993, has put together a 29-station network that includes two Florida stations, WTAN(AM) Clearwater, Fla., where the Phillies go for spring training, and WIOD(AM) Miami. Bill McCadden, sales manager, WCAU, said the major advertisers for the station's broadcasts will be Anheuser-Busch, Chevrolet, Amoco, AMB Paints, U.S. Air and Cumberland Farms.

Harry Kalas, Richie Ashburn, Andy Musser and Chris Wheeler will handle the play-by-play and color commentary for radio, television and cable. Gary Maddox will contribute color for cable.

♦ Pittsburgh Pirates ♦

KDKA(AM) Pittsburgh will again broadcast the Pirates this year over its clear-channel, 50,000-watt facilities, but, unlike years past, the pioneer Group W station will not hold the broadcast rights. Dean Jordan, the newly hired director of broadcasting for the Pirates, said the Bucs decided to retain the radio rights this year, create the radio network of 40 stations (up from around 30 full-time affiliates last year) and sell the advertising time. "We felt we could market the product better," he explained. According to Jordan, on the radio broadcasts, the Pirates hope to make $1.6 million on revenue of between $2.7 million and $2.8 million. The "six-figure advertisers" already on board are Anheuser-Busch, Giant Eagle supermarkets, Mellon Bank and Donnelly.

The Pirates enthusiasm for the broadcasting business does not extend to television. Jordan said the franchise has sold the television broadcast rights to Group W's KDKA-TV Pittsburgh under a new, two-year agreement (with an option for a third year). The agreement, which would bring the Pirates an average of $2.5 million over three years, Jordan said, calls for the broadcast of 46 regular season games (seven home, 39 away) and two preseason games this season, up from 43

games last season. KDKA-TV, which will be doing its own six-camera production, is the flagship for a television network that includes stations in five other markets. Sherry Sieving, sales manager, KDKA-TV, ran down the list of major advertisers: Anheuser-Busch, Chevrolet, Bell of Pennsylvania, Equibank, Giant Eagle Supermarket and Allstate.

The Pirates are also in the second year of a three-year agreement (with two-year option) with Tele-Communications's regional sports services, KBL Entertainment Network. KBL, which now reaches some 950,000 cable homes (including 213,000 in Buffalo where the Pirate games have to be blacked out when the Toronto Blue Jays are in town or on local TV), will televise regular season games (33 away and 22 home) and three preseason games.

The Pirates deal with TCI is a complex one, involving the team's on-field performance and such ancillary arrangements as a plan whereby TCI purchases large blocks of tickets. But the bottom line, according to Gil Lucas, sports/programing director for TCI in Pittsburgh, is that TCI will pay the Pirates $923,000 this year.

Four announcers rotate on the radio, broadcast television and cable coverage: Lanny Fratare, John Sanders, Steve Blass and Jim Rooker.

♦ St. Louis Cardinals ♦

The St. Louis Cardinals are selling well for KPLR-TV, according to its general manager, Barry Baker. "It is an insane baseball town, regardless of how the team finishes," he said. "And there's a bigger priority on baseball in this town now that the football Cardinals have left" for Phoenix. The biggest sponsors signed up are Anheuser-Busch, Central Hardware, Goodyear, McDonald's, Taco Bell and Schnuck's Grocery. A network of 25 stations, one of the biggest in baseball, will reach an estimated 9.5 million homes, nearly twice the number reached by the KSDK(TV) network, last year's rights holder, Baker said. KPLR-TV will present a total of 58 games, including two preseason and the home opener.

KMOX(AM) plans to hold on to Cardinal rights "for many years to come," according to Robert Hyland, general manager. The station is going into the second year of its current contract. The full regular season schedule will be covered along with 10 preseason games. Most sponsors are the same as last year: Anheuser-Busch, Chevrolet, Amoco, Schnuck's, True Value hardware and MCI. Coverage includes the pre- and post-game *Bob Gibson Show*, hosted by the former Cardinal pitching ace, and games announced by Jack Buck and Mike Shannon.

No partner has been chosen yet to join former Cardinal pitcher Al Hrobosky in the booth for Cencom Cable Associates' 50 home cablecasts. Cencom plans to advertise heavily by TV, radio and newspaper to promote its 1988 coverage. It has also produced a show of last year's Cardinal highlights and is working on a deal to repeat some of last season's most exciting games. John Clark, vice president, programing and marketing, said five of the cable systems Cencom distributes to will deliver games by pay-per-view. Other cable systems will offer pay channel packages for all 50 games. Last year's games averaged about 11,000 homes per game. "This year on season sales, we appear to be running 25% to 30% ahead of last year," Clark said.

Scrambling changes baseball's broadcast playing field

Stations must make investment to pick up highlights from backhauls; RTNDA voices resistance despite availability of some clear feeds

Broadcasting Major League Baseball games and highlights will be a new ball game this 1988 season as the summer game follows the cable programing industry lead and, for the first time, requires scrambling of backhaul satellite transmissions—feeds sent from game sites to television stations, national and regional broadcast networks and cable program services. According to a number of sources, those end-users will have to adjust financially and logistically to a new set of rules that, at least for the coming season, may not be entirely clear.

Of most immediate concern to some broadcasters is the prospect of having to pay for something they now get for free: highlights of baseball games for newscasts.

Major League Baseball hoped last fall to have all the backhauls scrambled by opening day. But the scrambling plans were at least two months behind schedule last January when MLB chose Hughes Television Network to implement it (BROADCASTING, Jan. 11) and Hughes, a few weeks later, settled on General Instrument's Videocipher-IB (VC-IB) as its scrambling system. As of last week, plans were still two months slow. John Tagliaferro, president of Hughes, said last week that it is now hoped the system will be in place and ready to go sometime in June.

The system is a complex one, requiring scramblers at uplinks sites in 20 major-league cities and addressable descramblers at the downlinks of all television stations and regional cable networks holding television rights to games. Hughes's contract requires it to buy, install and maintain the scramblers and descramblers and build and operate an authorization center to turn the adressable descramblers on and off.

"Things are moving," Jim Wright, vice president of operations at KPLR-TV St. Louis, told BROADCASTING last Wednesday. Hughes was busy that day, he said, installing computer equipment at that broadcast rightsholder for 1988 St. Louis Cardinals games.

MLB's central motive for scrambling, according to Bryan Burns, MLB director of broadcasting, is the same cited by cable programers: to "get control" of transmissions and secure them against unauthorized use—by home dish owners and bars in particular. MLB took three Minneapolis area bars to court early this year and won an injunction against the defendants prohibiting further unauthorized reception of MLB video transmissions.

"At some point, I firmly believe Major League Baseball will be in the direct-to-home [satellite broadcasting] business," said Burns, citing last year's deal with Japan's state-owned broadcaster, NHK, by which NHK broadcast 100 MLB games via its direct broadcast satellite to subscribers throughout Japan. "We're negotiating to be in it again this year," he said.

A major consideration in the whole scrambling decision, Burns said, was the fact that backhaul encryption, by ending free access, makes it possible for regional cable networks to begin selling baseball to dish owners. In addition, MLB or some third parties authorized by MLB could, "if we think it works," begin selling "something like" a three-games-per-day package to the home satellite market this season, he said.

Calling legislative and law enforcement activity in the U.S. related to copyright infringement "a failure," Burns said that MLB has to "take control of what is up there and belongs to [MLB]...If all the backhaul is going to stay up there clean, there is never going to be a business. Scrambling is as inevitable for us as it was for HBO or CNN or any of the others in the business."

Although the scrambling effort is aimed at preventing dish owners from receiving baseball games for free, many broadcasters will also be adversely affected. According to Tagliaferro, sportscasters who want to cull the backhaul feeds for sports highlights will have to buy descramblers (at $3,500 a unit) and pay a $250-a-month administration fee to cover the cost of continually authorizing and deauthorizing the descramblers. The MLB is not trying to make a profit off the sportscasters, Burns said. The money that comes in from the broadcasters will go into the operation of the scrambling system.

That Hughes is managing the scrambling does not mean baseball rightsholders have to award Hughes contracts to handle their satellite backhauls, said Burns. Rightsholders are free to deal with any transmission service they wish, he said. The contract with Hughes specifies that Hughes must allow